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punch

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SHERIFFS Vol. CCXXVIII

No. 5962



UNA BENDICIÓN . . .

OLD MARÍA sits making her lace. As stitch follows stitch she gives thanks for the electricity that lights her work. "Electricity", says María, "is *una bendición para el hombre* — for the benefit of Man."

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"This," said the Stork to the Distinguished Visitor, "is the Compounding Panel." He pressed a button. Lights flashed. Levers moved. Needles chased round dials.

Mr. Faraday was most impressed. "What made it do that?" he said.

"Electricity!" said the Stork.

The Distinguished Visitor's eyes lit up. "Do it again," he said.

The Stork pressed a different button. Different lights flashed. Different levers moved. Different needles chased round different dials.

"Let's press them all!" suggested the Distinguished Visitor, obviously electrified with delight.

"Not now," said the Stork. "You see, those lights over there tell us which of many varieties of oils and fats are needed at any given time. Every time I press a button, one of these oils or fats starts flowing into the blending tanks over there. This particular light shows that Palm Kernel Oil is coming in, and . . ."

"Oils and fats?" said the Distinguished Visitor. "You mean it does something *else* as well? As well as all those lights and levers and things?"

"Certainly! It helps to make Stork Margarine!"

"Margarine?" said the Visitor. "That was just after my time you know. I've often wondered what it tasted like."

"Try some!" said the Stork, producing a packet as if from nowhere.

"Wonderful," said the Distinguished Visitor. "So this is what margarine tastes like!"

"No!" said the Stork. "This is what *Stork* tastes like."

"All this and Stork too!" sighed the Distinguished Visitor, as he gazed at the Compounding Panel—a loving, faraway look in his eyes.

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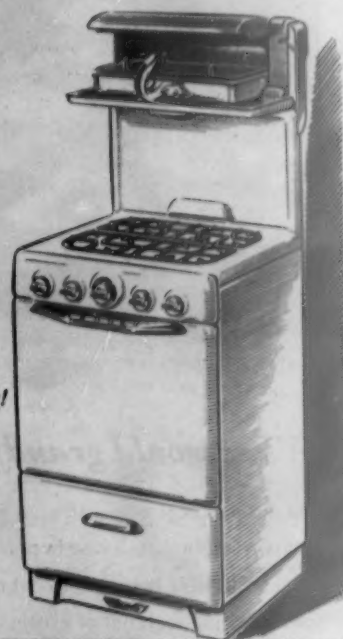
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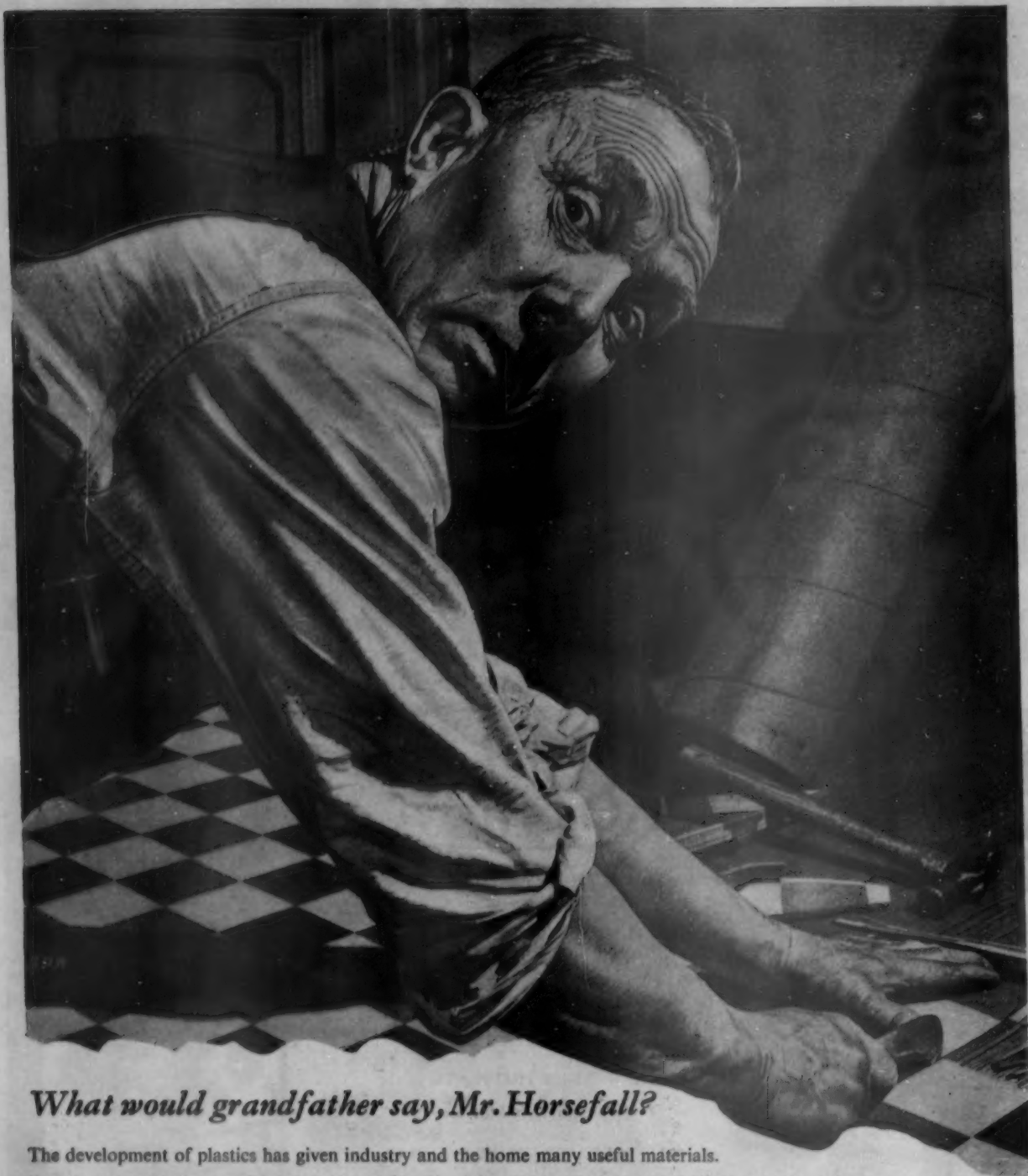


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P123



What would grandfather say, Mr. Horsefall?

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(Worsted Spinners)

An Excellent Trading Achievement

LORD WILMOT'S REVIEW OF THE INDUSTRY

The thirty-fifth Ordinary General Meeting of Illingworth, Morris & Co., Ltd., was held on January 26 in Bradford, The Right Hon. Lord Wilmot of Selmeiston, P.C., J.P. (the Chairman), presiding.

The following are extracts from his circulated Statement:

The Profit and Loss Account shows a net profit before taxation of £687,500, compared with £567,500 for the previous year. After providing £377,500 for taxation there remains £310,000, which compares with £248,500 for the previous year. The Directors recommend an appropriation of £162,638 to General Reserve.

Current assets exceed Current Liabilities by £4,474,000.

TRADING CONDITIONS

The past year was the first reasonably normal trading period since the war. Prices moved only within moderately narrow limits and business came along in sufficient quantities to keep us fully employed and with sufficient work ahead.

As a result of this return to more normal trading, the long delivery dates, amounting to six or seven months for spinners, have gone. Orders are now placed because the goods are wanted and not just as a speculation or to keep in the ordering queue. Manufacturers and merchants, therefore, are in the fortunate position that they no longer need to make such long or heavy commitments for their requirements; but we, as spinners who buy our wool in the primary markets, do not share in these benefits since we must buy our raw materials when available.

The high level of wool prices last season was a matter of some concern and I am sure that, in general, lower prices, which would encourage an expansion of markets, would be welcomed by the industry. So far this season we have seen lower values and let us hope that stability at these lower levels has now been reached and, the difficulties of adjustment having been overcome, there will be more capital released for necessary development.

SYNTHETIC FIBRES

The question of synthetic fibres continues to be of interest to every worsted spinner. While we are convinced that these synthetic fibres have come to stay, the highest class end of the trade still prefers wool and pure wool. This is particularly true in the United States where eventually a substantial proportion of the yarns we spin find their way in the form of the highest quality cloth.

In the export market the demand for our yarns continues to expand and all steps are being taken to increase our overseas sales.

For some time past your Directors have been considering the reorganization of the James Tankard branch at Upper Croft Mills, Bradford, one of the principal and oldest established members of our Group, producers of high class coloured yarns. The premises are structurally inadequate, and we are undertaking a comprehensive scheme of new buildings and machinery lay-out for continuous flow production.

Our order book continues to be healthy, and, although I am glad to say our delivery dates have greatly shortened all our works are on full time and evening shift work is still being undertaken.

The changing conditions of trade, however welcome, may produce increased competition, and perhaps lower margins of profit. Nevertheless, we face the future with confidence.

We have recently acquired the controlling interest in the old-established firm of John Smith (Field Head) Ltd., which is now a subsidiary.

The report was adopted and the total Ordinary dividend distribution of 7½ per cent for the year was approved.

THE AVON INDIA RUBBER CO.

Previous Sales Records Surpassed

The 65th ordinary general meeting of The Avon India Rubber Company, Ltd., was held on January 26 at Melksham, Wilts., Mr. C. M. Floyd, O.B.E. (Vice-chairman) presiding.

The following is the statement by the Chairman, Major R. F. Fuller, D.L., which had been circulated with the report and accounts:

The group profit for the year, after providing for taxation of £119,260, amounted to £95,273, compared with last year's figure of £63,395 to which was added £80,000 brought from Raw Materials Reserve.

During the year under review there has been an increase in the price of raw materials, but the rise has not been steady and the fluctuating nature of the market has caused manufacturers in the Industry to show some hesitation in increasing their selling prices. Therefore the full impact of increased costs of raw materials was not passed on to our customers during the course of the year.

Our sales beat all previous records, both in volume and value, and this is a matter for satisfaction in the light of competition now being experienced. The current year has, so far, opened with encouraging prospects.

Our factory at Bridgend has passed through the inevitable difficulties associated with a new venture; it is now at the point of consolidation into a satisfactory concern.

OVERSEAS ACTIVITIES

As you will know, disturbed conditions still prevail in British East Africa, and it is very satisfactory that our branch there has continued to operate successfully. As I informed you last year, Avon Tyre Remoulding Services Ltd., Nairobi, commenced operations in November, 1953, and although a small loss resulted from less than eleven months working, there are sufficient indications to lead us to believe the foundations of a successful business have been laid.

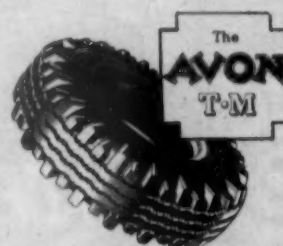
Our business overseas has expanded and every effort is being made to continue this development.

Additions to the fixed assets of the Company amounted to £259,609 during the year. After deduction of depreciation and other allowances there is left a nett increase of £106,250.

New installations in progress amount to £62,415 while our future capital commitments are estimated at £122,000.

The happy relations with our employees continue, and I should again like to take the opportunity of thanking them all for their loyal support throughout the year.

The report was adopted and a total distribution of 8 per cent. on the increased Ordinary capital was approved.





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Change up to BP Super

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LORD HAREWOOD's appearance on the nation's screens last Wednesday marked yet another social triumph for the modern entertainment miracle. If there is no slacking off a new category should be added to the annual awards—Television Earl of the Year.

More Commonwealthism

OPENING an art exhibition at the Imperial Institute Sir David Eccles took the opportunity to suggest that the Institute should now come up to date by calling itself the "Commonwealth Institute." This certainly makes sense; at the same time a hint might be dropped to the Imperial Tobacco Company, Imperial Chemical Industries, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and others. Moreover, if he really wants to pay an apt compliment to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, now our guests in London, and at the same time consolidate his reputation as an opener of art exhibitions, Sir David might try growing a neat little "Commonwealth" under his lower lip.

Waste of Money

If a recent B.B.C. request is granted, Florida State University will send over recordings of tropical fish noises, said



to consist of "thumps, croaks, crackles, barks and whistles"—or nothing, in fact, that you can't get free from any studio audience.

Catching the Speaker's Ear

LONDONERS who hitherto thought politicians self-seeking were much touched to read how Sir Edward Boyle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Supply, and Mr. John Profumo,

Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, gave up valuable time to attend a demonstration of a "silencer" for helicopters. It was disappointing to learn, farther down the column, that the device's effectiveness was chiefly being assessed by observers inside the House of Commons.

Great Train Robbery

TWELVE hundred millions
To make the railways go;
Who's going to find it?
(As if we didn't know).

Leaving Them Cold

IT is reported that the National Book League will ask local authorities



to provide alcoves for books as well as refrigerators in new council houses. In the case of allegedly obscene publications which have come unharmed through the Law Courts the books could with advantage be kept in the refrigerator.

Playing it Down

IT isn't often that tameness can be charged against a *Daily Express* news story, but many readers must have felt cheated last week over that Royal visit to the Crazy Gang. It was all very well explaining that "one of the royal escorts said, as he trod on Mrs. Powell's toe"—a lady occupying one of the glamour-dusted seats near by—"I say, I'm awfully sorry. Thanks very much," but where was the photograph of the damaged foot?

End of the Stage Coach

ANNOUNCING the Transport Commission's plans for electrification of the

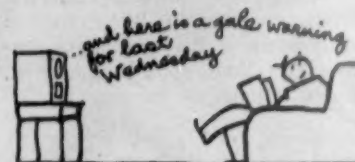
railways Sir Brian Robertson deplored the passing of "the mighty steam engine pounding through the night with the light of its fire glowing in the faces of the crew." However, it could be the salvation of the Christmas-card industry.

Have Your Cheque-Book Ready

WHEN the holder of a George Medal appeared as a panel-game challenger and mentioned that he was out of work offers of employment rolled in swiftly from viewers. It later turned out that he wasn't out of work, but on sick leave and being paid for it, and this disclosure earned the B.B.C. plenty of harsh criticism from indignant columnists. Lime Grove, of course, is quietly smiling. Columnists can hardly be expected to understand that audience participation is all.

View from Whitehall Place

AN informed public is an integer of democracy, as many a by-election candidate wishes he had thought of saying, and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, in last month's Press



release to farmers, showed himself well aware of it:

"WEATHER. The first half of the month has been cold, and frosts frequent and widespread. There were heavy snowfalls in most districts, particularly in the South-west where many roads were impassable. A thaw brought some flooding, but temperatures fell again with further snow. There was some fog around towns."

Please Make an Appointment

READERS of the recent reports about the safe in an Oldham bank that jammed shut may well wonder why it was that



IKE SAWYER DRAWS A LINE

"So they stood, each with a foot placed at an angle as a brace . . . and glowering at each other with hate . . . Tom drew a line in the dust with his big toe, and said: 'I dare you to step over that, and I'll lick you till you can't stand up . . .'"

New Readers Begin Here

By CLAUD COCKBURN

ALL I can say is that considering the position the man occupies, I consider his attitude surprising, if not more.

I refer, naturally, to the attitude of this C. R. Edgeley, the position occupied by whom is that of Manager, The Times Book Company, Limited, 42 Wigmore Street, W.1, who wrote that letter to, of all papers, *The Times* outlining a situation which, occurring in this Wigmore Street establishment, seems to have astounded him, or, if "astound" is too strong a word, taken him aback, given—you could nearly suppose—him furiously to think.

What, according to Edgeley's startled letter, happened in and around this

Times Book Company's lending library in Wigmore Street was that a little while back they had on their shelves what Mr. Edgeley describes as "a novel of high literary merit." Twelve of the library subscribers—they are push-overs for high literary merit in Wigmore Street—borrowed this book in succession.

"Not," gasps Edgeley, "until a copy had reached its thirteenth reader was it noticed that a whole section of the book had been erroneously inserted and was, indeed, part of an entirely different book. It is all the more surprising in that, at the point at which the wrong insertion is made, the last page of the correct book ended half-way through a sentence, and the first page of the wrong

book began a new chapter. The characters and setting were also entirely different."

If Mr. Edgeley had just stopped to think for a minute before dashing into print with news of an experience which he, for one, seems to find fairly grisly, he would have realized that before you could say Collapse-of-Civilization-Trouble-is-People-don't-really-read-I-mean-really-read-nowadays-my-grandfather-made-us-learn-Old-Mortality-by-heart-before-he'd-let-us-go-on-to-The-Antiquary, a whole lot of under-informed people would be viewing with undisguised alarm, saying "If this happens now, what, sir, I ask you, will be the effects when we have Commercial TV as well?" and making jokes about "Well, considering some of the modern novels I've read, I must say I'm not wholly surprised that" etc., etc.

Let me say, here and now, to such ejaculators that their reactions do little credit to their cultural education, and permit me to say—in the same breath, if I can make it—to Book Company Manager Edgeley that I believe his affectation of "surprise" must be some kind of what, for want of a better word, I will call "affectation."

What on earth is there *new* about the situation he describes?

Is he seeking to laud *tempora acta*, and insinuate that our splendid publishers and binders of this New Elizabethan Age of ours are one, or even two whits, more careless than their forefathers?

For surely Mr. Edgeley knows as well as I do that people—and a lot more than thirteen people, Edgeley—have been reading *Macbeth* for a long time without bothering to ring up and complain that five whole scenes from an entirely different work called *Footloose in Dunsinane* were bound into the original by a binder so wassailed he couldn't tell Globe from Bankside.

Most scholars nowadays accept the fact that Shakespeare collected, by way of an out-of-court settlement, very heavy damages from the publishers. This, shrewdly invested, was what he lived on during the post-*Macbeth* years, a discovery which, one hopes, will finally write *finis* to that dreary old controversy about Yes, but even given the value of



"My God! Is nothing sacred?"



"Miss Carter, darling, my monthly salary is £48 15s. 4d., your monthly salary is £48 15s. 4d. . . ."

the ducat in those days, how did a mere script-writer for still merer strolling players earn enough to get around so in Court circles, so it must have been the Earl of Southampton.

There seems little doubt that Shakespeare—who was nobody's fool, mind you—noticed what had happened to *Macbeth* because he remembered a thing that happened to Spenser. Somebody said to Spenser that he thought *The Faerie Queen* was "quite good" but "a bit on the long side."

"It wouldn't have been so darn long," riposted the poet, "if that fool publisher of mine hadn't bound in all that stuff from old Thingummy's *Plain Man's Guide to Poetry*."

(They told Spenser he ought to sue, but he said publicity of that kind would do him harm in Court circles.)

It is to the above episode that Charles Dickens refers in his famous unpublished letter to Willkie Collins.

Right from the early days down to Maugham times there has been discussion as to the exact significance of the great novelist's use of the expression "b....y imbroglio" in this connection.

The facts are that when *Great Expectations* appeared in book form it was found to contain—as anyone can see by reading it—a couple of sizable slabs from a privately printed novel by Collins called *Rhinestone Lady*, (the basis of the subsequently popular musical comedy of that name which created such a furore when it was put on at the St. James's Theatre and was the subject of a hardly veiled critical comment by the Prince Consort.)

Unfortunately, when Collins consulted his lawyers, it was found that twenty pages in the middle of *Rhinestone Lady* were in fact the opening pages of *A Lexicon of Commercial Terms*, by a man who was later to become the father of Robert Louis Stevenson. Everyone

agreed someone ought to get mulcted, but just who was to mulct whom, and for how much, baffled the finest intellects of the age. (It was probably at this stage that Mrs. Dickens took to the bottle, if that is indeed what she did.) In the circumstances "b....y imbroglio" would appear to be the *mots justes*.

It is extraordinarily difficult to believe that Manager Edgeley is ignorant of these facts, or really unaware that all that silly talk about Gladstone's Collected Speeches when it came out as a book was because pages 317-345 and, again, pages 601 to the end were accidentally taken from, respectively, *Down Under* by an author calling himself N.S. Wales, and an anonymous pamphlet on apiculture.

Had the facts been fully appreciated at the time, Ireland's struggle for Home Rule might have been a very different story. (As a matter of fact the book entitled *Ireland's Struggle for Home*



"Mugs Lannigan, eh? He's going to be a nasty shock for the viewers."

Rule actually is a very different story, the greater part of it having been erroneously inserted from an early novel of Joseph Conrad, which failed in consequence.)

Naturally, there have always been more or less unscrupulous critics and reviewers who have developed a vested interest in the concealment of the true facts. Look at any of the weekly Michelin Guides to good literary feeding and you will see one or more of these gentry at work, shooting their mouths off about "inconsistencies" in Mr. So-and-So's latest novel, "unevenness" and all the rest of the guff, with the suggestion that there is some pretty esoteric literary or spiritual mystery involved in the fact that Mr. So-and-So says this here, and pretty much the opposite down at the bottom of this page there.

For two pins they will talk about "focus." Focus, if I may say so, my foot. How much focus would you have, I should like to know, if you wrote a book about, say, a lot of sexually distraught people maladjusting themselves in a Dorsetshire country house and when it comes to the rather delicate passage where the young man is talking to his aunt it breaks suddenly into a roaring bit of action from a novel built

around a tiger hunt in central India?

Fortunately for everyone—I repeat, fortunately, Mr. Edgeley—about 90 per cent of readers would take that in their stride, not just in spite of the fact that the nephew-aunt dialogue stops in the middle of a sentence but because

of it: significant, that tiger bursting in. Could be pre-cognition or something.

Like a Parliamentary candidate I saw, who, for his eve-of-the-poll rally, got down the biggest swell he could think of from party headquarters, and the swell was so tight he was able only to mutter a few nearly inaudible words before he reeled across the platform and fell down in the wings.

Naively, I thought this might injure the candidate's chances. He told me No. "This audience," he said, "is so respectable that only about one per cent of them have ever seen a man in that condition. The rest of them just imagine it's the new style of oratory from London."

That, Edgeley, was approximately the state of mind of the first twelve people who read this work of literary merit you are on about, and I'd thank you not to sneer at them.

Everyone else on the literary front has long since accepted the fact that virtually every book published now, or at any other time, is in fact a bundle of hardly related pages bound at random.

I say "virtually every" because there are, of course, exceptions—books which reach the reader intact, the way the author wrote them. *Finnegan's Wake* is an example which springs readily to mind.

The Lost Producer

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,

Just for a paltry five thousand a year—

Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us—

Freedom to advertise biscuits and beer!

They, with their gold to give, doled him a dollop;

So much was theirs—and how much they allowed!

He will grow rich on the profits from wallop,

We in our rags shall stay, paupers but proud!

We that had loved him so, honoured him, followed him,

As from an office-boy upward he strove . . .

Shifting the scenery round Ally Pally . . .

By Jacob's ladder at last to Lime Grove!

Dimmock is of us! Harding is for us!

Dimbleby with us—in gallant array!

He alone breaks from the brave B.B.C. men,

He alone sinks to the rich I.T.A.

E. V. MILNER



"J'emmènerai le cocker, Jean—il va mieux avec mon nouveau tweed Anglais."

Strange Interlude

By NICOLAS BENTLEY

HER dress was of black velvet and severely plain in the mediaeval style, fitting close to the trunk, which was well packed and with a waist somewhere in the region of the pelvis. The tight sleeves tapered to a point over the back of the hand and the full-gathered skirt fell just short of the ankles. These, to my faint surprise, were hidden in white openwork stockings and the feet in good Cromwellian shoes with square buckles. This was evening dress, and, as evening dress calls for jewellery, a locket on a black ribbon was tied tight round the column of her throat and a string of chunky

amber beads like the teeth of a chain-smoking dinosaur hung down below her midriff. Amber, too, was pendant from her lobes, which peeped out from under a pair of coiled and greying plaits. Her face reminded me of, among other things, a self-portrait by Hokusai, except that her small elongated eyes were behind pale horn-rimmed glasses.

"How do you do?" she said as we were introduced, with a grave articulation that made it sound as though she really wanted to know. I having asked the same of her, it began to look as though conversation had lagged beyond hope of recovery. But no such luck.

"You have tried the punch, I presume?" she said presently, in the tones of one who would take no denial. I tried to laugh off the beaker of whisky in my hand with some feeble theorizing about herbs and spices not being good for the old digestion.

She looked at me like a disapproving musk rat. A moment's thought would have told me there wasn't anything I could teach her about the properties of herbs and spices, or, I suspected, about gillyflower water, the making of rush mats, pomanders, or how to vamp an accompaniment on the bass viol.

And so the talk slid over to other things. We spoke of her habitat. It seemed she had her being, if you could call it that, in a small Buckinghamshire town, which on that account alone would no doubt prefer to be nameless. I knew, because it was a household word where words now obsolete and of Saxon origin are the common currency of speech, that she and her husband did very nicely thank you out of a craft factory, where they turned out textiles of plain but mediocre design and furniture of more than mediocre discomfort. I glanced at her capable hand, with its heavy cornelian ring, as she raised it to remove with charming unselfconsciousness a hair that had got into her mouth, and I imagined it, shuttle-clasped, moving with dexterous speed between warp and woof as her loom exuded some hideous fabric.

Now to her side came the diffident bulk of her mate, looking as uncomfortable as a plucked ostrich in his unaccustomed evening togs. A fellow who couldn't let ill alone, he had added to his troubles by wearing a black stock that pushed his hair up at the back into a fringe like Grock's wig. For what seemed longer no doubt than it was they looked at each other speechlessly in mutual satisfaction. Presently this period of silent adoration came to an end, and in a voice higher than the chandelier her spouse gave tongue.

"Well, my deahr?"

To which, in tones somewhat lower than his, she flashed the riposte:

"Well?"

Again silence fell between them and they stood smiling mutely at each other.

"You have tried the punch?" she said at last.



Unable to block my ears in time, I caught his shrill response.

"I have indeed and I pronounce it capital."

He grinned at me shyly with teeth that were rather too far apart. I noticed his hand had been surreptitiously exploring his pocket, and I guessed what for. He leant towards me and said *sotto voce*, with a look that appealed for my support and failed utterly:

"Do you suppose our hostess would permit a pipe?"

"I don't smoke, so I wouldn't know," I said, lapsing through sheer nerves into the affectation of the conditional. He peered about him with a look of wildly exaggerated consternation and then, in order, I suppose, to keep up the conspiratorial pretence, tip-toed away.

Once more the colourless almond eyes of my companion—how else to describe her?—watched me with unblinking expectancy. I felt I could not disappoint her. After all, she was, or appeared to be, a woman. It was unfortunate; my knowledge of how to make a rush mat had deserted me with startling suddenness as soon as I left my kindergarten. And what did I know of the bass viol? I tried to rack my brains for the latest intelligence from the Dolmetsch front, but they refused to be racked. Finally, for want of a better utterance, I found myself telling her that I had just come back from Wembley.

"Wembley," she said. Her tone was that of the Blessed Damozel, a tone of sweet, incurious surprise.

"Trinder on ice," I said, "or rather, Aladdin."

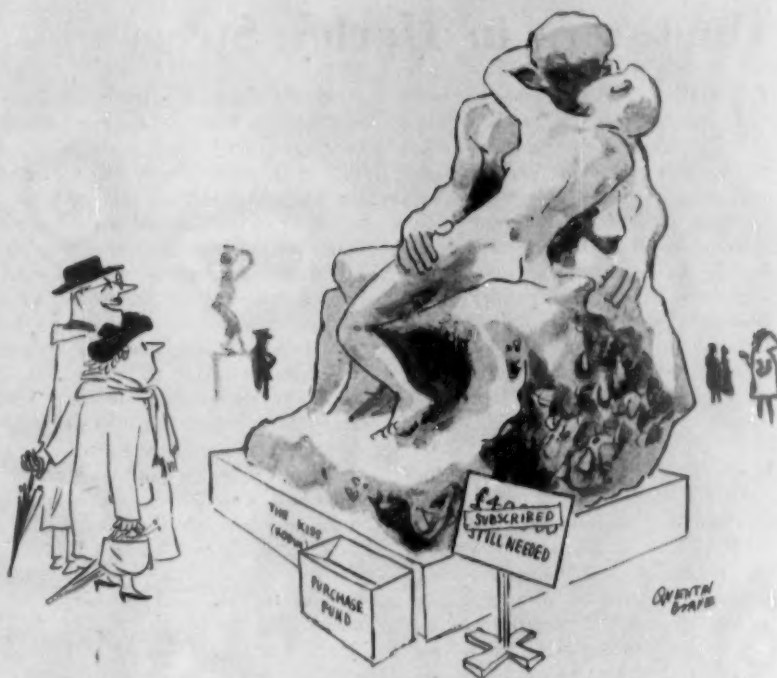
Through closed lips she made a sound like that of someone playing a one-stringed fiddle with an empty bottle. As luck would have it, and a better stroke seldom came my way, her hero at this moment returned. His pipe was in his hand and I was sorry to see that his manner was that of one who has glad tidings to impart.

"Deahr," said he, "a surprise; Amanda has brought her lute and is going to sing."

Whereunto answereth his ladye with tranquil mien yet merrily withal, "O joy!"

"ROYALIST CHEERS IN MADRID"
The Times

Policeman takes his name.



"Just think, Gladys—it's ours at last!"

The Ape at the Typewriter

HAPPEN to me? I've always been a steady Pensionable ape from a very respectable Family—never late at the office—it's Nonsense, it couldn't.

I've done my stint without stint at the typewriter Eight hours a day, just like the Civil Service, For years (some say for a million) and nothing, Thank heaven, to show for it.

And here I am within a fortnight of retiring To my Wee Tree Toppe along the Kingston By-pass, And It has happened: *Elsinore. A platform Before the Castle.*

What can I do? Here comes the supervisor! Don't let him see *Francisco at his post*, oh, He's stopping beside me. For Darwin's sake don't Enter To him *Bernardo*.

Happen to me? I think I've learnt my lesson. There he was looking over my left shoulder, And I'd swear he—but he was murmuring, quite happily, "Nonsense, as usual."

PATRIC DICKINSON

Hucksters in Harley Street

By RICHARD GORDON

THE belief that doctors never advertise is one of the public's charming misconceptions about the medical profession, like the notion that surgeons operate only when strictly necessary and obstetricians are better than midwives. Doctors advertise as fiercely as brewers—and much more ingeniously, because all publicity must be sought under the ethical code of the General Medical Council. These rules prevent the British doctor from imitating his Egyptian colleague by stringing a banner across the street outside, saying "Dr. X, Good For All Diseases, Especially Diarrhoea"; they ensure that his brass plate is almost invisible and his consulting hours as difficult to read as the figures on a station time-table; but they are sporting enough to contain nothing preventing his wife ringing up the local cinema in the middle of the big feature on a Saturday night, and having "Dr. Y IS NEEDED URGENTLY" flashed all over Gregory Peck.

The most powerful advertising in the medical profession comes from Harley Street, where the address alone gives magic to any diagnosis. Any doctor who can afford the rent can set up practice there—there is plenty of room, because the street mysteriously slides round corners into a string of A, B and C's, enabling patients to get a Harley Street opinion almost in Regent's Park.

Once you've signed the lease you send out cards to your medical-school cronies telling them of your change of address. This indicates only that you are open

for business, because all of them know that they can find you for a game of golf for many years to come in the same old villa in Putney. Hardly any specialist can now afford to live in Harley Street, but most of them advertise themselves by giving the impression that they do. An American doctor's waiting room looks so clinical that you could do a laparotomy among the magazines on the table, but the waiting room of a Harley Street doctor makes the patients feel awkwardly that the family have just cleared away lunch, and his consulting room looks like a Regency gentleman's study with a couch moved in for the afternoon. This domestic atmosphere can be overdone: one lady, left by her medical attendant while she undressed, informed him that she was ready by touching the bell and produced the butler with a cup of tea.

Once you have a footing in Harley Street the size of your practice largely depends on how carefully you advertise to the general practitioners who send you patients. If you are on the staff of a teaching hospital this is simple: medical students are impressionable young men and women, and even if they get brighter spotting your mistakes every year it takes a lifetime to forget a string of good scandalous anecdotes about your colleagues. Quicker and more rewarding publicity comes from writing scientific papers to medical journals. It is not necessary to perform any research for this, or even to know much about your subject. You collect a bundle of random

case notes, settle down with a typewriter after dinner, and begin: "In an extended series of cases of peptic ulcer treated by me in the past five years, I observed that, in five, patients"—you glance through the notes, looking for something pretty common—"also suffered from hammer toes." Write enough to fill a page of the *B.M.J.* or the *Lancet*, head it "The Association of Hammer

Toes and Peptic Ulceration," and it will appear over your name in heavy type with degrees.

This establishes you as a specialist in treating peptic ulcer with the experience of at least five years, and indicates that you are particularly good on patients with duodenal ulcers and hammer toes. You will thus scoop into your account book every private patient with indigestion and bad feet in the Home Counties. With luck, someone might christen the combination "The gastro-hallux syndrome"; or turn it into a disease and name it after you.

To counter this clever publicity fellow-specialists who are furious at missing a good idea immediately send a letter to the editor of the journal. These letters closely follow the same form. They always begin "Dear Sir, I was greatly interested in Dr. Z's most erudite and informative article in your last issue, which all who are concerned with this problem agree makes a substantial step forward in our knowledge. I was somewhat surprised, however, that he made no reference to my paper on the subject in the *Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.* (1935), p. 10991a, reprints of which I shall be glad to supply those interested. I also find it a little difficult to understand how Dr. Z draws his conclusions from only five hundred cases, when I have myself treated eighteen thousand, not including those waiting outside as I write. Yours, etc. . . ."

Possibly the easiest way of making money on Harley Street was found by a fellow-student of mine who, feeling the atmosphere would be good for study, lodged in a room over a garage at one end. Returning from a night out, he was struck with a brilliant idea. A few minutes' work with a paint pot, and the patients wandering off the Marylebone Road next morning were confronted, under the official street label, with an arrow pointing to his front door and the legend TO THE DOCTOR.

§ §

"THE BOOKHAMS WOMEN'S INSTITUTE
A full and happy year has been enjoyed under the presidency of Mrs. M. Boardman. Varied talks have been given ranging from 'The First Elizabeth' to 'Guide Dogs for the Blind.'—*The Bookhams Bulletin*
Anything on wolf-whistles?





Top and Bottom Dog

By LORD KINROSS

THE rabbits of Britain are vanishing, and the foxes are prowling ever closer to the cities, seeking the swans and the wildfowl in the parks. The humans of Britain are declining. But the dogs of Britain are multiplying and prospering. To-day one in ten of the population of Britain, man, woman and child, is owned by a dog, bitch or puppy. This week six thousand of them will bring four thousand dog-breeders to Cruft's.

As democracy encroaches on modern Britain, this ruling race represents a survival of aristocracy. Mongrel man demands, increasingly, a pedigree dog. Browsing in the *Debrett* of his world, he aspires to share his home with a Gioconda of Noblehurst or a Daphne of Copleydene, with Zeus of Evenlode, Pol Roger of Pentwyn, Milady Jane, or the Duchess of Stubham. In its glossy weeklies he reads, with covetous anticipation, that the glamorous son of the famous Avon Prince "is siring puppies of rich colouring, with nobility and conformation typical of himself"; that the sons and daughters of Don Juan and Krista "are being reared on the best of everything, regardless of cost" and may be his. He may even read, with pride, of his very own: that she is "an exquisitely pretty little lady, nicely proportioned for her size, with glorious coat and fringes"; or that she is "a topping bitch," and very nice all over.

His companion must be bred, as humans seldom now are, according to a classic mould of form: head "long and straight and fine"; eyes "almond shape, very dark, full of fire and intelligence"; neck "well-proportioned and strong, to admit of the head being carried high and with dignity"; feet "rather small and of good shape, the toes well arched";

hindquarters with "a gentle sweep from the flank down to the front face of the hock, and a more pronounced sweep from the buttock down to the point of the hock."

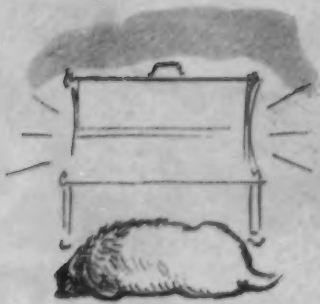
These lordly rivals of Vitruvian man live, suitably, in a world where all are their servants. As befits a leisured class, they are loaded with all the blessings of an enlightened civilization: the Four Freedoms, the Seven Pillars of Security—free of charge. Their standard of living rises in a steady curve. Each dog now has his own bed, "a place he can retire to whenever he feels like it, a place he can definitely call his own." He can enjoy foods, rich in vitamins, proteins, carbo-hydrates, specially tinned

for his benefit, like the foods of humans; milks specially bottled ("the nearest thing to bitch's milk . . . identical in taste"); meats specially prepared by human firms which work for him alone; whalebeef or cowbeef (raw or cooked, steaks or minced), jellied tripe, mutton crackling, pressed horse.

"How omnivorous," we read, "can a poodle get? One of mine will eat, among other things, hot spiced beetroot, raw swedes, figs and dates, and actually helps herself to tomatoes and grapes. She also has a good technique with spaghetti" . . . "My puppy scorns everything except milk chocolate, and as she is rather a delicate wee thing I indulge her."



"Sit!"



Harley Street specialists provide them with a health service. Where they fail, Divine agencies now intervene on their behalf. *Our Dogs* records the miracles of a Mr. Tomkins, who will faith-heal the dogs even of unbelievers. An S.O.S. was sent to him on behalf of a dog called Sion, in the last stages of hardpad. That night a lady in the house "awoke to see two white hands, 'like luminous gloves,' over the dog's basket. By the morning Sion had fully recovered, and was trotting about lively and hungry." Mr. Tomkins also saved the career and reputation of a TV dog star, called Lady, by giving her absent healing during a show, and so stopping her from coughing.

Canine society has a flexible hierarchy, based on equality of opportunity. The Upper Ten changes annually. Terriers, once supreme, are now its bottom dogs. *Le petit fox* may still be popular among the French, with their old-world attachment to *le sport*. But his rustic coat and his backwoods habits are incompatible with the refined, progressive, urban Britain of to-day. The British Bull-dog too has lost his status. He tends to be "pendulous bellied," with "restricted heart room." Moreover he looks out of place in a suburban street.

A notable rise to power, from seventieth place before the war to fourth place after it, is that of the Boxer, a product not of *Debrett* but of the *Almanach de Gotha*. His popularity, like that of the Alsatian since the end of World War I, reflects the tendency of the British to respect their enemies, and of their women to respect toughs with tender hearts. The Pekingese, bred for Edwardian laps in succession to the Pug, bred for the broader lap of Queen Victoria, retains his social status. But

the Cocker Spaniel, for years Top Dog, with his feminine eyes and his masculine ways, has been supplanted this year by the Poodle.

The Poodle's meteoric progress, from the boulevards to Downing Street, from seventeenth to first place in a mere five years, is a success story proving, if proof were needed, that his antecedents can only be British. Mr. Stanley Dangerfield, who has written a book about Poodles as others write books about Cecils (*Your Poodle and Mine*), makes the comforting suggestion that his family were originally Irish water spaniels, and provides documentary evidence, in the form of a contemporary broadsheet, that there was a "pudle" in England, in the entourage of a prince, in 1642.

Since then, however, the world has become a smaller place. Thus the Top Dog is a Miniature Poodle, half the size of his forbears, eating half as much food, taking up half as much space, hence fully at ease in the *bijou* homes of progressive English humans. Groomed and manicured by expert beauticians, with electric clipper plates, bone nippers and hair-driers, adorned with puppy clip, lion clip, Royal Dutch clip, lamb clip, modern clip, he is equally at ease before the camera. In an age of spot-lights for all, he gets his picture, and above all that of his human protégée, into the glossy weeklies of *Our Humans* and even on to the TV screen.

It is thus a miniature aristocracy that the British are breeding to rule them. Their Sheep-dogs, from Shetland, are now but twelve inches high. Their Dachshunds, with bellies but three-quarters of an inch from the ground, will soon be crawling on it like miniature serpents. Already there are Spaniels for the sleeve. Soon there may be Labradors for the lap. And humans themselves, in appropriate deference, will dwindle to their proper proportions.

Get the Boss to Join In

"There are several useful relaxing movements you can do at work without calling attention to yourself. One is to roll the head round without moving the lower part of the neck—first to the right then to the left. It eases the neck. To loosen tension in the shoulders and upper arms roll the head and neck from the shoulders. Similarly you can roll the whole shoulders as the arm hangs loosely down."—*The Star*

E. Shepard



CHARLES the SECOND



HERE he comes, so bright, so elegant, stepping so lightly, as though the whole day were his. And so almost it is. Fashion, breeding, good looks and good manners, all seem in him combined. Who could withhold admiration? While he breathes the air, and treads the afternoon gravel, dandyism, you feel, still lives.

Whereby, as they say, hangs a tale.

Less than a year ago my friend X, who does not too badly as a thriller writer, and whom you could count on for an hour's cheer at the local, was the most slovenly man alive. Tangled hair, horn-rims askew, most of his time spent in an old sports coat with an old pipe. Lodgings over an antique shop. Worked from eight to eleven in the morning, doing his three hundred words a day—never a word less or more—and leaving the day (as most of us see it) free. An enviable existence. Tens of thousands enjoyed his thrillers, though X himself, employing a pseudonym, was curiously ashamed of them.

His landlady patched his socks,

cooked him nourishing stews, ran after him with a hat when it rained. He belonged to our Gibbons Society, which went about giving recitals, and was a fair if nervy tenor.

We first began to notice his absence when he failed to turn up for "O clap your hands." It didn't much matter, though being short he made a good middle man, but when the following night, at the repetition, there was still no sign of X and no word from him, questions began to be asked.

Was he ill, or away? Busy? It seemed unlikely, since the pub hadn't seen him either. Why hadn't he let us know?

Someone proposed dropping him a card, and there the matter rested.

Not for long, however. Next day there was news. X had a dog.

Oh, was that all!

A dog would suit X, who had never looked like settling down; and if he couldn't exactly bring him along, surely—with the landlady's help—there would be evenings off.

"You wait till you see him," remarked our informant.

I happened to catch a sight of X that same afternoon. He appeared, I thought, much as usual, if a bit haggard and

as though fiercely distracted; then I noticed the lead in his hand and, among shoppers passing and re-passing—

Good heavens! Such a barbered and clipped, smart, smiling, milk-chocolate-coloured poodle, standing three feet high, as you can't imagine! X's dog? It was unbelievable.

I began to cross, but the poodle had set off at a trot, in the most graceful way, and by the time the traffic had cleared they had vanished.

However, I picked up from others what had happened: X had obliged a friend by looking after the dog for a few days, the friend had taken a post abroad, and X had been persuaded to keep the dog on. He wasn't difficult to persuade.

But of all dogs a poodle! And of all poodles Charles! For I must admit I've never met anything quite so dignified or well bred in my life.

He was so quiet in the room that you might hardly have noticed him, but for a presence that imposed itself. If, somewhere at your back, he stretched or sighed—and this is an age for sighing, goodness knows—you'd forget it was Charles and wonder who it could be you were crowding from the fire.

Happening to turn round at such a moment and meeting Charles' refined gaze, I was startled out of my composure. I laughed. He looked, with his fine, serious eyes and his floppy moustache, so exactly like Gorky, whose autobiography I had just been reading.

"He's like Gorky," I said to X. X replied stiffly that Gorky was altogether shaggier, which was quite true; for on top of his head Charles sported not the wild growth of revolutionary sympathy but a frizz any actress of the *Comédie Française* might have borrowed.

X told me how sensitive and considerate Charles was, so that it was a shame even to let him think you might be laughing.

I did my best to make it up to Charles. I greeted him courteously. I looked up Gorky: there was really no resemblance. I brought him cracknels, and I never patted, I laid my hand on his shoulder as one might with an old friend.

As I might have done with X himself, but that now he was a quite different man, and changing day by day. He was growing exquisite to match Charles.

Gone the disordered hair, the speckly bags, the mild grin, the whole easy existence we had envied; he now wore a suit of smart cut, his socks not only paired but sparkled, his shirt cuffs projected the three-quarters of an inch they should, and he might have been the author not of *Taradiddle*, V.C. but of *Zuleika Dobson*.

He explained, in a hesitating way, that one had certain responsibilities, duties to society, which he might have neglected. The public eye must be fed. There was Style. Quick ones and madrigals were a thing of the past.

After that I saw very little of X except in the distance. When I met him and Charles, I always bowed, and mastered an inclination—when we had passed—to stand and look back.

A fur-collared coat came into the picture.

And taxis.

Charles started the taxi habit. Having one day grown tired after his walk round the park, he had presented himself at a taxi-rank with such authority that, unobtrusively reading the address on his collar, the man

had opened the door and driven him home.

He got to know all the taxi-men and would hail a cab whenever he was in a hurry or felt slack.

Sometimes X was with him. Or one would be seen urging his driver on, in pursuit of the other. Soon it was taxis here, taxis everywhere.

X has moved from the antique shop, and now occupies a flat with a commanding view over the Park and two bathrooms—one presumably for Charles.

But he seems to lack the serenity that should go with position. Is this new life of ease beginning to tell? Are the bills mounting? The books not selling? Has Style invaded the sacred three hundred? I don't know.

Ah, here *he* comes—Charles, of course. How splendid he looks, how proud without disdain, beautiful without foppishness! But who leads the dog's life now? Not Charles the Second, as he rounds the corner, stepping on air.

For I have known Charles the First too; but that's another, and a much sadder, story. G. W. STONIER



Kuddle Korner

By ALEX ATKINSON

Auntie Amy, who knows all the Funny Ways of Little Doggies, answers your Anxious Queries.

Q. There seems to be something the matter with Mrs. Miniver, my dachshund. She is eighteen and a half. Her eyesight is failing, and sometimes she isn't sure who I am. Also she cannot walk any more, because her tum-tum brushes along the ground and she weighs ever such a lot. Another thing is her breathing: she snuffles a great deal at the foot of my bed, where she lives, and this keeps me awake. Sometimes I think she is unhappy. My vet has no sympathy for me. I won't tell you what he suggests. Can you help me?

ELEANOR P., W.1

A. What Mrs. Miniver needs is a change of atmosphere. Since she cannot walk, why not get her a little cart? I saw a sweet one only the other day, in old rose and eau-de-nil, with a tiny folding hood in case the naughty rain-drops decide to pitter-pat! There were tartan reins for Mummy to pull, and a dear little blanket with matching pillow.

I'm sure she would enjoy her "walkies" in such an elegant carriage, and it would give her a new outlook on life. Remember that if we really try, we can make our doggies last *ever* such a long time. As for her eyesight, have you thought of glasses at all?

Q. My baby goldfish keeps his mouth open all the time, and I fear he may fill with water and pass away. Is there something I can do?

Mrs. R., Crouch End

A. I know nothing of goldfish. I sometimes feel it is cruel to keep them. Perhaps he has lockjaw.

Q. How selfish people are! Yesterday I got on a bus with my dear little poodle, and had to go upstairs. Jo-Jo *loves* to look out of the window, but do you think the horrid woman by whom we had to sit would change places? She refused point-blank. She had an appalling little boy on her lap, who wasn't even interested in looking out of the window: he just kept munching his awful sticky sweets and pulling faces at poor Jo-Jo. Such a dreadful little boy, too, with ragged clothes, and marks all over his legs where someone had hit him with a stick, and hardly any flesh on his bones. Why he wasn't at school I can't think, but since he couldn't articulate properly I suppose that didn't matter. I did feel proud of my Jo-Jo, sitting on my lap as good as gold, with his nice new ribbon and his *Toujours l'Amour* perfume. The people on the bus noticed the difference too, for there was many a

pat on the head for Jo-Jo as they passed, and many a frown for the awful little boy. I was *ever* so glad when Jo-Jo eventually knocked all the sweets on to the floor (he's very intelligent) and then jumped down and *sat* on them! How the people round about did smile! The awful woman could do nothing but snivel. Wasn't it clever of Jo-Jo to pay her out for her selfishness!

Mrs. M., Hampstead

A. Yes, very. And thank you for the snap. He certainly is a credit to you.

Q. I am worried about my peke, Candy. Sometimes in the evening she will not talk to me, and spits at Mary Malcolm. I feel we are slowly drifting apart, and yet I know she does not really hate me. It's just that life is losing its zest for her.

LILY F., Bath

A. Why not try a tasty supper-snack? Something different—exciting! For instance: A pound of fillet steak stewed in any good Graves. Cut into teeny slices, and serve with a sauce made from the rest of the wine, chopped braised mushrooms (*not* the stalks), minced asparagus tips, and a few truffles. Always remember that our doggies feel the strain of these difficult days just as much as we do, and a gay surprise now and then works wonders.

Q. The woman next door has no doggie, but two years ago she gave birth to a human child. Recently she has taken to walking down the street whenever I am in the garden, with the child in her arms as though it were a doggie. One day she had tied a big bow round its neck, and yesterday I'll swear it was wearing a collar. My Rufus barks at them whenever he sees them, but it has no effect. I know that soon she will walk past with the child on a leash, and I shall go out of my *mind*. What can I do?

PHYLLIS D., High Barnet

A. Ignore her. She is jealous. Alternatively, move to Kensington.

Q. Often when I am standing at bus stops strange women kiss my Audrey. I do not like to discourage this, because Audrey is naturally affectionate, and I should hate her to become repressed.



But I sometimes wonder if it is really good for her? R. P. (Miss), Kew

A. Definitely not. If too many people kiss your doggie, she may become confused in her little mind as to who actually loves her. This could lead either to an anxiety neurosis or to promiscuity. Besides, you never know where some people have been.

Q. I read in the paper about a confounded poodle called Grandma attending a cocktail party, shaking hands all round, drinking dry Martinis, and having its toenails painted light green to match its mistress's. What the devil are we coming to?

LT.-COL. F., Bournemouth

A. What indeed? Light green is not a shade I would recommend for a poodle—and Grandma is rather a frivolous name, I feel.

Q. I am at my wits' end about my cocker spaniel, Rover. He simply will not be carried when we go for walkies, and he seems to resent it when I put on his sweet little duffel coat on windy days. He runs about in a very rough way if I am not careful, and has recently taken to barking. On more than one occasion he has chased little pussy-cats, and he refuses to sit quietly on his chair in a restaurant. He is getting quite a big puppy now. NANCY T., W.C.1

A. You really must persevere, dear. It is our duty to teach our doggies the proper way to behave. Try keeping him locked indoors for a few weeks—in one room if possible. Once you have broken his unruly spirit it should not be difficult to make a nice, quiet, lovable doggie out of him. Keep him on a diet of potted shrimps and chocolate creams. And don't despair. Always remember that you hold a trump card: your doggie trusts and respects you, and knows that everything you do is for his own good.



After You, Mr. Kipling

*THIS is the song that a puppy-dog learns when wool is changing to hair:
These are the words which help him acquire an earnest unpuppyish air:*

In the first beginnings, O best Beloved, Dog was Dog-on-his-own
Running here and there as free as the air in the high wild woods alone
And the smells of the wood were given to him and he named each by its name
And it was well with Dog-on-his-own until Beast-with-a-difference came,

Came and laired on the forest edge between Dog's land and Deer's
With his no nose and his blunt teeth and round ridiculous ears
And a rancid smell and a borrowed fell and a fire to lie by at night—
The beast that strode in an obscene mode on his two hind legs upright.

And Dog-on-his-own he came by night and saw from the edge of the wood
And said to himself "I will tame this beast, for its roasted meat smells good;
Its fire is warm and its roof-from-the-rain is indeed an excellent plan.
And when it is tame I will give it a name. Perhaps I will call it Man.

It can roast my meat and keep me warm. What more could a dog desire?"
So Dog-on-his-own stepped out of the trees into the light of the fire.
"This is easy as pie," says Dog-on-his-own, "and money for jam as well."
Is it a wonder that Dog, poor Dog, being only canine, fell?

*This is what makes the terrier snap and the high-strung Corgi fret.
This is the story the spaniels know and the bloodhounds never forget.*

PETER DICKINSON





Full Diesel Ahead

By H. F. ELLIS

THE British Transport Commission has been pretty widely praised for its Railway Plan. I don't know why. Anybody who hasn't any inhibitions ought to be able to make a good plan for setting his own house in order. Here is mine:

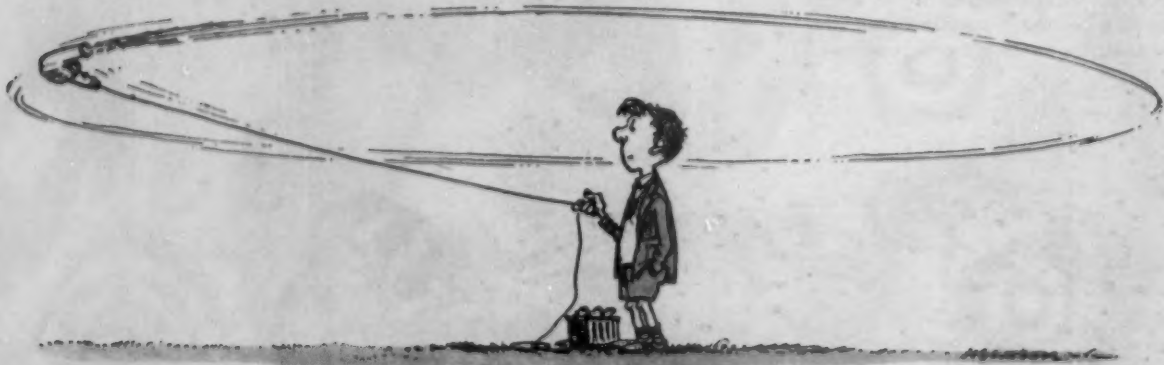
1. All woodwork must be treated three coats best quality paint inside and out, and ditto walls with plastic emulsion. The deathwatch beetle will be ruthlessly exterminated, and means must be found for clearing dead leaves, old tennis-balls, etc., out of guttering and downpipes to allow of a free flow of water throughout the system £350
2. Coke must be replaced, as the primary fuel for all boilers, by gas, electricity or atomic power as may be most suitable in the light of the development of the plan. The labour of shovelling up hodaful of the stuff from the backyard on a wet night is out of keeping with present-day standards and is uneconomical in shoe-leather £150
3. All rotting floorboards must

- be ripped up and thrown away. There will be progressive replacement with strip parquet topped with Persian carpets of bright and forward-looking design £280
4. All furniture will be utterly modernized and rationalized. There will be bigger and better armchairs, and some economy will be effected by drastically reducing the number of rickety deck-chairs in the garage £400
 5. Expenditure will be required on sundry other items, including adequate arrangements for early morning tea, general tidy-up in the garden, more gin all round, etc. £60
- Total £1,240

This plan, in its way, is just as far-sighted and broad in scope as the Transport Commission's and would have been put into effect long ago, but for a difficulty about the money. The Commission don't give a fig for money. It seems only yesterday that British Railways couldn't lay their hands on a

penny to give their engine-drivers, and here they are proposing to run up a bill ten times bigger than mine without turning a hair. What's more, they reckon to find £400 millions of the total sum required from their own resources, "such as" (my paper explains) "depreciation, provisions, etc." There is a mystery here, which any economist or financier could explain away in a moment. But the explanation belongs to a world in which depreciation is a capital asset, and capital is something you no sooner have than you "write it down" and feel all the better for it afterwards. We must beware of getting bogged down in technicalities.

When the Commission have spent their twelve hundred million the results, it is fair to say, are going to be quite something. Fast, clean, regular and frequent passenger services; speedier and cheaper movement of freight; jollier stations; proper humps in marshalling yards; no kinks and corners in the tracks; and carriages that you could run your finger all round, inside and out, and not know the difference. There is no doubt that all these benefits will accrue, because the Commission say so in their Plan. But what they don't say, and what tends to prejudice old reactionaries like me against the whole scheme, is that all this cleanness and quickness and regularity and cheapness is going to go on in an eerie, a nerve-racking silence. People may think they will quickly reconcile themselves to the loss of the visual beauty of steam, that they may even come in time to love the loathsome diesel—a contraption that doesn't even know which way it's pointing and has to have a driving cab at each end. And so they may. But what about the loss of all those lovely



noises? Is it generally realized that there will be no more huffing and puffing? No laboured chuffing up slopes. No hissing at wayside stations. None of those mighty blasts under the arched roofs of terminuses, which no less an authority than Canon Roger Lloyd has described as "one of the most completely satisfying noises in the world."

Even the *clank-clank-clink* of goods trains is to go. The present system for stopping trucks is to let each one hit the one in front a healthy wallop, so that the guard of a long goods train can count on eighty or ninety separate and distinct warnings that he is going to get a hell of a jolt any moment now. The Commission's plan to fit continuous brakes to freight cars means that the guard won't get any warning at all; he won't even get a jolt. But we are not concerned with the guard's troubles here. For generations Britons have lain awake at night and listened to the soothing music of shunted trucks, the slow, quiet breathing of distant engines, and derived a deep contentment from the thought that others are out there working while they lie warmly in bed. This innocent pleasure is to end. For the future, the silence of death will lie like a pall over the swift and sanitary scene.

But what is the use of bleating when the wolf of progress is afoot? It is stupid to cry like a child over a broken toy. It is whimsical. Worse, it is selfish. For the clanking of goods trains is bad, Sir Brian Robertson says, for trade; and the pleasurable sights and sounds of steam are bought at the expense of dirt and cold and endless hours of shovelling coal on exposed footplates in every kind of weather. Can there be anyone so wrapped up in self-interest, so deaf to the needs of the community at large, that he will seriously object to any proposal that releases the fireman from his back-breaking and degrading toil?

Only the fireman himself, perhaps.

2 2

Blind Date

"Before the session began Mr. Mole welcomed the Colonel and said that it was the first real chance they had had of meeting him. 'The club is composed of volunteers, people who are really concerned, people on whose behalf I would like to offer you a most warm welcome,' he said."

Cambridge Daily News



Go East, Old Man

Professor J. B. S. Haldane says he may take Indian citizenship "if the Indian Republic will have me."

HERE, where the act weighs less than the good will,
And tarnished fames are touched with a new light,
And the mere fact of coming east can still
Confer a cachet on the convertite,

I, an old man needing a new respect,
Full of an ageing spleen and finding now
Hostility less galling than neglect
And dead bays tetchy on a balding brow,

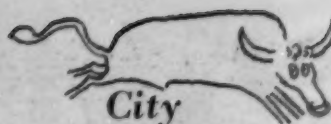
Have travelled eastwards, resolute to savour
That spiritual respite I have sought
Since I abandoned intellect in favour
Of other less exacting modes of thought.

So, hardly flattering hosts too quickly swayed
And courteous to refuse my proffered hand,
I leave a west whose ways I have betrayed
To woo an east I do not understand.

P. M. HUBBARD



the



City

Consumer Durables

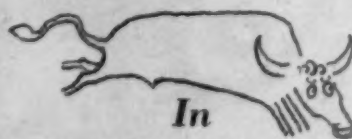
ECONOMISTS, scientific humanists and the Treasury Bulletin for Industry call them "consumer durables"; the *Daily Express* calls them "household gadgets." But neither term seems particularly appropriate. When I consider how often I am summoned from my study to effect repairs to the flex of the electric iron and the vacuum cleaner, and how often the electrician chap has to overhaul the radio and television, I question the validity of "durables"; and when I read that "washing machines, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners and immersion heaters have replaced the domestic servants of our Victorian grandparents," I feel that the vaguely derogatory ring of the word "gadget" is misleading. I shall dub all consumer durables and household gadgets quite simply "home machines."

Well, now. Let me answer a number of correspondents who have asked "Can you recommend a class of equities likely to show steady appreciation in 1955?" with a qualified "Yes, certainly—home machines." Look at the facts. Last year (Jan.—Sept.) sales of food in Britain rose by 3 per cent, clothing by 5 per cent, and home machines by seven per cent. The British people are rapidly abandoning their suspicions of new methods of promoting hygiene, domestic comfort and leisure: they are now buying gadgets with something akin to traditional American alacrity.

The market for home machines seems unlimited. Radio manufacturers have never been busier, and radio is the one corner of the gadgets market that one might have expected to be approaching saturation. What is happening, of course, is that people are scrapping their ten-year-old receivers and buying new ones—one for the living-room and another for the bedroom and the early morning Test scores. And electric washing machines? Well, last year about 500,000 were sold compared with 93,000 in 1948, and the future of this market can be gauged from the fact that in 1954 no less than 430,000 hand-operated wringers and mangles were manufactured and domesticated. The 1954 home refrigerator sales, at 220,000, are almost double those of 1948.

My first half-dozen in the *Daily Express* "£5,000 Must Be Won" competition would be television (because it

offers easily the cheapest, most exciting and progressive form of popular entertainment), washing machines (because the little woman—bless her!—will insist), refrigerators (because our new houses have neither cellars nor adequate stillage), electric fires (because of nutty slack, the shortage of firewood and the ever-increasing price of coal, coke and other combustibles), radio (because television often seems the least exciting and progressive form of popular enter-



In

the



Country

It's a Plant

THERE was only one person in our village lazier than I am: and that was the old miller. But he had every justification for taking things easy since he had worked himself like a mule most of his life. Of course, his old water-wheel had stopped trundling round twenty years ago when farmers started grinding their own corn. But even then the miller had to go on working since he was really a beach-comber by profession and the tides turned twice a day. The coast-guards said he was a smuggler too and that he went on living at the mill just to be near the sea. Certainly it was suspicious that he always drank cognac for breakfast.

Ever since I can remember, the miller had walked the entire length of the beach every tide, clawing his way over the rocks to lug a hatch-plank or an empty barrel up the cliff.

The sea yields a great variety of things, from corpses—for reporting which the coast-guards give you a miserable fee of 5s.—to the occasional barrel of beer or drum of oil. But all these gifts cast upon this coast are similar in one respect: they are terribly heavy. The result was the miller wore himself out.

He retired from active looting two years ago. And from that day he became the idlest man among us. He never even dug his garden, but would sit in the local pub summer and winter, exercising nothing but our credulity as we listened to his stories and paid for his drinks. Expensive as his tastes were in that direction, being restricted to French

tainment), and finally the immersion heater (because families are getting larger and bath-cube manufacturers are powerful propagandists). But you may think differently.

Now for the investments. I am optimistic about all the leading, blue-chip manufacturers, about those who supply them with components and those who sell their products. The trouble is that many other people hold similar views and have done so for some little time. You may decide that the current price of Ordinary shares in Pye, Pressed Steel, General Electric, Murphy and so on already reflects all reasonable prospects of progress in the immediate future. And on the other hand, and like me, you may not.

MAMMON

liqueurs, I used to draw considerable comfort from his company, for there was a bond of sloth between us.

But a month or two ago he began to let me down. From my armchair I saw him pass my window going for a walk. I observed him repeat this urban peculiarity every day for the following two weeks. My suspicions were aroused; I began to wonder what delights were lying on the beach and decided to keep a close watch on the old man. To my surprise I saw that he turned away from the coast and wandered in the direction of his mill-leaf. After a few days I noticed another peculiarity: he always set off with a bundle of walking-sticks and returned with just one.

Eventually curiosity overcame sloth. I kicked off my slippers and accosted him.

"Why have you started to take exercise?" I asked resentfully.

"The Government subsidizes me," he replied, "and I always did enjoy picking up something for nothing. You could do the same. Anybody with two legs can pick up this bonus. It's the Poplar Subsidy. All you have to do is to take a bundle of walking-sticks for a walk and stick them into the ground a couple of yards apart. The Government gives a shilling for every stick planted in a hedgerow, as they want the timber for flooring and matchwood."

I offered him a drink for this information, though it will take several saplings to pay me for his Green Chartreuse.

RONALD DUNCAN



"My dear friends . . ."



Tuesday, January 25

Invigorated by their months in the country, the Commons romped through as much work in six hours as they are accustomed to in six days. Mr.

BUTLER promised equal pay for the ladies, but not this week; two Ministers made statements on current events and a third, Mr. SANDYS, gave a reading from the report of the Beaver Committee on air pollution which delighted everyone but Mr. SILVERMAN; three new Members took their seats; one bill was read the first time, three the second, and one the third.

The most important measures were the new Army and Air Force Bills. These had virtually had a second-reading debate in November, when the report of Sir PATRICK SPENS's com-

mittee was debated, so no one found much new to add except a self-consciously Scottish group who thought it monstrous that Scotsmen should under the new Acts (as under the old) find themselves subject to English law on enlistment. There was also Dr. HYACINTH MORGAN, that master of the unconstructive interjection, who listened to all the proceedings with the rapt attention that he gives to every word that is spoken in the Chamber, and ejaculated at (presumably) appropriate moments "And Welsh!" "And Cromwell!" and "Give him a little alcohol!" After a short dispute about the colour of the Manual of Military Law, both bills were given their second reading without a division.

Even after three-quarters of an hour had been spent on the adjournment debate on the Edinburgh-Glasgow

Union Canal, and Mr. BEN PARKIN had sought, in vain, the Deputy Speaker's help in rescuing his constituents from the mounted police in Parliament Square, it was still possible for the House to rise by half past eight.

Meantime, the Lords, when they had concluded an interesting discussion on "no par" shares, were considering whether they ought to take any action about reforming themselves. Viscount SAMUEL, for the Liberals, and Earl JOWITT, for the Labour peers, seemed to think they ought. The Marquess of SALISBURY, speaking for the Government, was cagy, and Lord ELTON, for the Independents, expressed himself alarmed at the prospect of something "on the model of the French revolution." One almost heard the tumbrils roll as he spoke. Lord SALISBURY allowed their Lordships a period of respite in which they might put their affairs in order, but being directly challenged by Lord SAMUEL to say when the Government would take steps to reform the Upper House (if they did) took refuge in the classic Liberal phrase, "Wait and see."

Wednesday, January 26

The echoes of the previous evening's "demonstration" in Parliament Square clattered on in the Commons.

As soon as the Foreign Secretary had finished his statement on the "dangerous situation" in China, Mr. GEORGE CRADDOCK asked the Home Secretary, in a private notice question, why mounted police had been used against the demonstrators in the Square, with the result that some of his constituents were unable to keep their appointment to see him. Before Mr. LLOYD GEORGE could answer, Mr. BEN PARKIN rose on what he called a point of order and told a long anecdote about his experiences with the mounted police, who had, it seemed, "ridden him down" and addressed him in terms not often repeated in the Palace of Westminster. As he made no complaint, and the Speaker disclaimed responsibility for the conduct of the police, mounted or otherwise, the point of order might have been allowed to drop; but Mr. SILVERMAN, to whom points of order are the breath of life, hopped up with another one, this time on a question of privilege. A bare moment later, up leaped Mr. TURNER-SAMUELS further down the bench with yet another. At this stage the Speaker called on the Home Secretary to answer Mr. CRADDOCK's all-but-forgotten question, which he did briefly and

uninformatively. Then, with a kind of dream-like inconsequence, Mr. GRESHAM COOKE, the new Member for Twickenham, took his seat. He was hardly out of sight behind the Speaker's chair when Mr. GEORGE THOMAS rose to a point of order, and Mr. SILVERMAN to his second. Mr. BEVAN, perhaps the only Member besides Mr. CRADDOCK to remember what the original question had been, now rose to plead against the use of mounted police against crowds, as they "exacerbated" them. The Home Secretary (after Mr. PAGET had put a point of order) gave fuller details of the use of the police, in which he forbore to make the obvious point that mounted police exacerbate crowds because they effectively bring them under police control. There was a last *cadenza* from Mr. SILVERMAN on the theme of privilege, a brief *coda* from Mr. TURNER-SAMUELS, and the House was free to go on with its appointed task of discussing constituency boundaries, which occupied it until nearly four a.m.

Thursday, January 27

It was one of those days when the Opposition all together decide on a topic for questions and then give the responsible Minister a good going-over. This time it was Mr. PETER THORNEYCROFT, and his subject was monopoly trading, with special reference to tyres and TV tubes.

House of Commons:
Scottish Crofters



Sidney Silverman



Ben Parkin Lloyd George Aneurin Bevan

Mr. THORNEYCROFT sidestepped the more swingeing blows with the excuse that he must wait for the report of the Monopolies Commission. Mr. GRESHAM COOKE, who knows all about these things, looked as if he would have loved to say something, but felt twenty-four hours' membership inadequate to justify him in intervening.

The House was tired and apathetic after its late night, and left the discussion of the Crofters (Scotland) Bill exclusively to the Scots, who found it on the whole to their taste and gave it a second reading without dividing.

Friday, January 28

Mr. RAYMOND GOWER, the eager young Tory from Barry, was the first private Member to go in, and he took the opportunity to deliver a three-quarter-hour homily on the advantages of co-partnership in industry. He was seconded equally volubly by Mr. TED LEATHER, whose transatlantic accent and blandiloquent references to the United States obviously kept the dozen or so American airmen in their seats in the Gallery longer than they had

House of Commons:
Partners

intended. From the Opposition ranks Mr. WHEELDEN, voicing the tenets of the Co-operative movement, expressed himself in favour of "increased socialization of industry," which sent a little buzz through the Tory benches. "What's he mean?" "Do you know what he means?" He meant, it appeared, nationalization. The topic being one in which industrial relations were vitally concerned, it appealed to Government and Opposition supporters in approximately the ratio of four to one, or to be more exact twelve to three. Not the least interesting feature of the debate was the lively part taken in it by Captain CHRISTOPHER SOAMES, whose activities in the House are mostly confined to feeding documents to his august father-in-law.

Major RICHARD SHARPLES may well have been relieved that the good fortune which gained him a place in the ballot within a few weeks of his election did not put him higher up in the day's proceedings. He listened with exemplary attention to the speeches on Mr. GOWER's motion, while the prospects of his own piece about traffic congestion in London getting an airing grew fainter and fainter.

B. A. YOUNG



BOOKING OFFICE

Songs of Araby

Lawrence of Arabia. Richard Aldington. Collins, 25/-

WHEN, from the ranks of the R.A.F., Lawrence sent him a copy of *The Mint*, Mr. Noël Coward wrote: "Dear 338171 (may I call you 338?) . . ."

Mr. Richard Aldington describes his extraordinarily interesting book as "a biographical enquiry," and, although it will be unpalatable to some people, there can be no doubt that a comparatively coherent picture of T. E. Lawrence (1888-1935) does emerge. That is more than can be said for most of the previous efforts to portray a curiously tortured and complex man.

Lawrence may be regarded as of interest under three aspects: as a writer, as a soldier-diplomatist (for want of better term), and as a personality—especially a personality of his particular period, one still in romantic reaction from Victorianism.

His status as a writer naturally remains a matter of literary opinion. For my own part—if I may speak subjectively—I have never thought his writing better than, at best, second rate. I agree with Mr. Aldington that he had a small, though distinct, talent, galvanized by an immensely powerful will. His style is pretentious, laboured, unalive; and he is unable to handle continuity even in the space of a single paragraph. Mr. Aldington draws attention to an Irish love of "verbal preciosity," shrewdly comparing *Finnegan's Wake*. He might have added that at his worst Lawrence is almost an Amanda McKittrick Ros of the Desert.

As a soldier-diplomatist Lawrence is, of course, best known. At Oxford he took a First in History and became a professional archaeologist. His experience in the Middle East obtained him a commission, in 1914, in the War Office. After two years in Cairo he was employed as political officer, with other British (and French) officers, to Arab irregular troops in insurrection against Turkish rule. In 1917 he was

promoted major and awarded a C.B.; an unusually high decoration for his rank. He was also decorated by the French; and the following year received the D.S.O. At the end of the war he was sent to the Peace Conference; and in 1921-22 held an appointment under the Colonial Office.



Clearly he was a brave and energetic officer where his personal enthusiasms were excited. He belonged to a recognizable type of eccentric British Orientalist, of whom Richard Burton is a characteristic example. However, as Mr. Aldington points out, Lawrence remains unmentioned by the Turkish and German generals who respectively wrote accounts of that theatre of war. Yet in the post-war period he became a household word. Clad habitually in a burnous, his portrait was everywhere, in spite of his far-famed shrinking from publicity. No exploit was too extraordinary to be attributed to him; no comparison too lofty to draw when with every circumstance of mystery his book, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, was published.

There can be little doubt that some of this notoriety was directly due to Mr. Lowell Thomas, who, sent to find aspects of the war that would make good

propaganda in the United States, organized with Lawrence's help the Lowell Thomas film lecture at Covent Garden. There was an opera set from *Joseph and His Brethren*, the band of the Welsh Guards, and a prologue that included the Dance of the Seven Veils. Propaganda is a necessary part of government. Mr. Lowell Thomas put on a magnificent show. Unfortunately it seems for ever to have wrecked many of even the most eminent people's sense of proportion where Lawrence was concerned.

Modern psychology does much to explain Lawrence as a personality. This clever, aggressive, pathologically vain boy was always at odds with his surroundings. That he was an unusual figure no one would deny; but this book catalogues an astonishing number of inaccuracies he spread about himself—while his admirers have done him little service by not taking Lord Melbourne's advice in agreeing to "say the same thing." Lawrence's final decision to enlist in the ranks could be paralleled in other cases of highly-strung, cerebral personalities. It is hard to see what else he could have done, as there seems little reason to suppose that he possessed much general administrative ability to be used in governmental service.

In some ways a painful book, it is really better that some of the truth should be known, and especially that a lot of the nonsense about this country "letting down the Arabs" shown up for what it is worth. The index suggests that on p. 332 "Violet Astor" should read "Nancy Astor."

ANTHONY POWELL

Anglo-Saxon

The Fourteenth of October. Bryher. Collins, 10/6

This book is enthusiastically introduced by Dr. Edith Sitwell, who finds it a masterpiece, full of strange word-magic. It certainly paints the background—Yorkshire, Normandy, giant-haunted Cornwall and the field of Hastings—with the wan, formal beauty of Anglo-Saxon illuminations; but the action is

that of a boy's adventure story. Making the hero an "artist" and the eager recipient of confidences from ink-compounding monks and rune-stored harpists does not add a dimension to the novel but only an ethereal sub-plot.

One is invited to take sides but it is difficult to feel that anybody in the eleventh century was very right or very wrong. The reader is lackadaisical over preferring Harold to William, Danes to Norsemen or Northern Thanes to Northern Earls. (Why have Edwin and Morcar always had such a bad press?) Bryher, like Garbo a stark surname, can sing the song of the world's dawn as freshly as any maker of dew-drops; but her Wulf's experiences read like dilute Henty.

R. G. G. P.

Prisoners' Bluff. Rolf Magener. *Rupert Hart Davis*, 12/6

Many books have been written on the experiences of British prisoners of war when escaping from captivity, but we have not heard much of the other side of the picture when wool has been pulled over the eyes of the British guards and the bluff of enemy prisoners has succeeded. When Heinrich Harrer, the author of *Seven Years in Tibet*, escaped from an Indian Prisoner Camp at Dehra Dun he was accompanied, among others, by Rolf Magener and Heins von Have. Shortly after the escape Harrer headed north while Magener and von Have decided to make for the Japanese lines in Burma.

This is their escape story, but the material available has not been sufficiently well utilized to hold the reader's interest as it could have been. Despite joining up with the Japanese on June 1, 1944, thirty-four days after their escape, Magener and von Have were virtually prisoners of the Japanese until the end of the Far East War and were eventually repatriated to Germany in August 1947 when their fellow prisoners had been home for almost a year.

A. V.

Drinkers of Darkness. Gerald Hanley. *Collins*, 12/6

East Africa before the war. Dispirited Britons sweating, drinking, committing adultery, not committing adultery, keeping the natives under, puzzled by the beginning of Communism among the Mission boys. Social differences emerging under pressure. The dreadful women. The hard-working failures of men. Preparations for celebrating Christmas underline how depressing life in this transplanted suburbia can be.

It seems a bit late in the day to turn the spotlight on yet another group of the nation's less desirable exports, but for those whose appetite for the seedy side of colonization is insatiable here it all is again, unaccompanied, as far as I could see, by anything fresh. What story there is lags; heat and boredom make life stagnate, and to give movement to an account of stagnation is very difficult,

though it has been done. I have not read Mr. Hanley's two other books, but judging by the quality of the praise they received they were outstanding. This reads like a hitherto unpublished first novel: ought I, perhaps, to call it promising?

R. G. G. P.

Where God Laughed: The Sudan To-day.

Anthony Mann. *Museum Press*, 18/-

This is a pleasant, gossip book about this and that in the Sudan and in particular about the recent elections in Southern Sudan and their aftermath. Mr. Mann found the elections pretty ridiculous and is more than sceptical of the outcome of them.

"It had been laid down, said Lalik, that a man should be chosen to go to Khartoum. (Why?—from the tribesmen.) He would not be a chief; he would be a representative. ('Why can't our chief represent us? He knows our needs.') This man would tell in Khartoum of the troubles of the people; he would avert unjust taxation (Murmurs of incredulity) . . . 'We do not understand this thing with boxes,' he cried. And then waving his arm to indicate the absence of the District Commissioner (warned off, in the interests of 'neutrality' by the Electoral Commission in Khartoum): 'Why have the English deserted us instead of explaining these matters to us?'"

As for the Parliament, Mr. Mann records that "several Members had already inquired . . . whether it was possible to be a member of the Opposition and the Cabinet simultaneously," but he does not tell us the answer to this very reasonable and natural question.

C. H.

A Year with Horses. Sketched and introduced by John Board. *Hodder & Stoughton*, 40/-

John Board's handsome volume describes the chief English hippic events of the season in Coronation Year and includes interesting sketches of competitors from overseas. Not all the invaders were successful. There are pictures of the young Argentine polo team winning the Coronation Cup, of Jonquères d'Orléans of France on his little Anglo-Arab show jumper Voulette, on which he won the Tally Ho Stakes, and of Mynheer Van Loon breaking his thigh when Ampère fell at the Quarry at Badminton. Altogether there are nineteen pictures of the "Three Day Event." No doubt the protracted nature of the Badminton contest gives the artist a better opportunity for studying his subjects than do the sports of steeple-chasing and point-to-points, both of which are curiously neglected.

The best drawings in the book are of the Lippizaner horses of the "Spanish School" giving their exhibition at the White City; the worst—of the Royal party at Badminton.

G. T.



AT THE PLAY

UNLESS somebody—which boils down to you and me—shouts pretty sharply in the ear of the L.C.C., soon there may not be a play to be at. The argument for pulling down our theatres can be made very simply. London is short of blocks of offices fitting to the new dignity of commerce. The theatres, most of them, are sited strategically in the West End. They are in the biggest financial jam in the whole of their chequered history. What could be more logical than to apply a humane-killer to the lot, so that the concrete-mixers can get busy pushing up glistening palaces of industry from which the directors can have easy access to their clubs? Who cares about the theatre anyway, in a country triply blessed with TV and Hollywood films and the pools?

I don't say for a moment that the L.C.C. would argue like this, but to an intelligent foreigner it must begin to look as if it might. The announcement that we may be losing the St. James's Theatre has been received by the British public with terrifying calm. A few letters on the subject have appeared in the leading papers, but it has never been treated as an important item of news. To the man in the street, if he has noticed at all, it has fallen into the category of the regrettably inevitable, like smog and the flooding of the Yangtse.



"She wants to know if we allow any rebate while Gilbert Harding's away."

It is fascinating to wonder what would happen in Paris if it were reported that the Comédie Française was to be torn down to make way for a post office, or a dance hall (as happened here, with the L.C.C.'s approval, to the Lyceum). I suppose bloodshed might just be avoided.

The St. James's is a very good test case to decide whether or not we have become a race of abject philistines. It is one of the two most beautiful theatres in London. Since it was built in 1835 it has added richly to theatrical history: Irving, Hare and the Kendals, Alexander, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Green Goddess*, Gerald du Maurier, *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney*, Sir Laurence Olivier's Festival of Britain season, the visit of the Comédie Française, the present run of Rattigan's *Separate Tables*—the list of its glories is longer than that. Moreover, it happens to be a kind of playhouse of which we are desperately short in London, of the right size to suit the straight play. This shortage is genuine, for through bombing and other causes we have at least eleven fewer theatres in London than we had before the war. As a result new productions have to queue up to swoop on an empty theatre, as nimbly as pilots in a fog at Heathrow.

Although the St. James's has not been sold, an announcement tells us that the L.C.C. has agreed in principle to its conversion into offices and showrooms; a "preliminary outline scheme" has been submitted, and a detailed scheme is

awaited for further consideration. The deal which would be involved is no doubt perfectly proper. Big business would say that if an industry has become unprofitable it must give way. To that there are several answers. One is that if big business itself had not hamstringed the theatre by boosting rents through speculation more plays would have a chance (before the speculators patriotically broke cover in the first war actor-managers did well enough to have fur collars). Another is that the Entertainments Tax is monstrously unfair, grabbing fifteen per cent of the total box-office takings even in the case of a loss.

But of course the main answer is that the question of the St. James's stands above the balance-sheet, and is a matter of national reputation. Here is a key theatre in the capital city of a country which still claims to be interested in the arts. If we let it go the point is not whether it will be supplanted by a pintable saloon or the headquarters of a peanut cartel, but whether we should not abandon any pretence to be the worthy heirs of Shakespeare.

In the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act of 1953 the present Government gave modified expression to the Gowers Report. As Governments go it is not without some appreciation of its financial responsibility towards the irreplaceable legacy of the past. The St. James's is irreplaceable. We cannot afford to lose it, and its future is a matter for swift Government action.

ERIC KROWN



AT THE OPERA

The Midsummer Marriage
(COVENT GARDEN)

MICHAEL TIPPETT wrote the words as well as the music. When he protests that his new opera is essentially a love tale and not a dabble in philosophy, we listen respectfully. But his text makes nonsense of the plea.

In the second-act ballet trees come to prancing life: you never saw such arboreal goings-on. If this isn't pantheism, D. H. Lawrence lived and fumed in vain. Jenifer and Mark swap visits to heaven and hell in trappings and circumstances that cite now Greek, now Indian mythology. The intention here, though TIPPETT leaves us guessing as to its precise nature, obviously transcends mere spectacle value. Towards the end the mists thin a bit and the moral becomes overt. Because they have each walked the spiritual heights and the carnal depths Jenifer and Mark are purged, whole and perfect. Thus we are up against a dim, dog-eared trinity: thesis, antithesis, synthesis.

That pseudo-philosophical hot-pot of this kind, subjective to the point of whim, should be served by a State theatre seems questionable to me. On the opening night there was booing from the gallery. Perhaps my view was shared. Good philosophy makes bad opera. Bad philosophy makes worse.

May not *The Midsummer Marriage* get by (i.e. "make" the repertory) on its music? I doubt it. In judging thus I do not, I hope, undervalue the richness of the score. TIPPETT's *re-living* and fusing of Tudor, Purcellian, Handelian and even Wagnerian styles is prodigiously beautiful. BARBARA HEPWORTH's neo-Cubist sets and pastel-shade dresses were pathetically at variance with the evening's sounds.

No composer could have wished for better musical grooming. TIPPETT has given his singers hard though rewarding work. All served him well: JOAN SUTHERLAND and ADELE LEIGH, RICHARD LEWIS and JOHN LANIGAN, OTAKAR KRAUS and ORALIA DOMINGUEZ. PRITCHARD's conducting was resilient, ripe, affectionate. No crotchet was left unpolished. But the music was one thing, the woolly tale another. I don't see how any opera can live long with such a split down its middle.

CHARLES REID

AT THE BALLET

Romeo and Juliet (STOLL)

CONTINUING his unremitting and unsubsidized zeal in bringing foreign operatic and ballet companies to London Mr. PETER DAUBENY has enabled homestayng *balletomanes* to witness dancing and choreography which have been judged worthy of the highest State awards in Yugoslavia. The present company is based on Zagreb, the home

of Croatian national opera. The dancers in it gave a taste of their quality on the opening night of the three-week season in Kingsway when in Act II of Borodin's *Prince Igor* they broke violently into the operatic scene with the well-known Polovitsian dances which turned out to be a not particularly close following of Fokine's choreography. However, it disclosed a leading dancer of enlivening agility in the person of IVICA SERTIC.

The company's full-length ballet, *Romeo and Juliet*, is a conscientious representation of Shakespeare's tragedy to the accompaniment of the familiar and agreeable music which Prokofiev composed for that express purpose. Except for welcome bouts of spirited and remarkably dexterous sword-play the story is unfolded with a placid and unhurried *naïveté*. To an English audience no balletic version of a play of Shakespeare's can escape being anything but a pale shadow unless the choreography transports the beholder to another world of artistic excitement beyond that of speech. The Yugoslav version of *Romeo and Juliet* attempts little more than to mime the action as faithfully as may be. The dancing invention is meagre, the steps few and without emotional significance. Not until Mercutio dies does the work rise to any excitement, but in that short scene—curiously reminiscent of Giselle's death from a similar wound—MILKO SPAREMBLEK touched authentic drama. NENAD LHOTKA was a handsome Romeo and ZLATICA STEPAN a pale and shrinking Juliet until she boldly clambered over the balcony and dropped to earth for a decorous *pas de deux*.

The one striking and effective contribution of MARGARITA FROMAN, the choreographer, came in the tomb scene when Romeo lifts the cold body of Juliet from the sepulchral marble slab and dances distractedly with it in his arms.

The *corps de ballet* provides some gay diversions in the manner of folk-dance, which suggests that it is in such rustic tradition that the dancers may presently appear to vivacious advantage. *Romeo and Juliet* is not ballet in the sense we have come to use the term but a gravely-moving performance in dumb show. The pallor of dresses and settings added to the feeling of depression which not even the playing of the orchestra was able to dispel.

C. B. MORTLOCK

3 AT THE PICTURES

The Man Who Loved Redheads
Simba

JUDGING by subject (as so many people do), I have no excuse at all for putting *The Man Who Loved Redheads* (Director: HAROLD FRENCH) before *Simba*. It is a far more frivolous and empty affair, designed for absolutely nothing but momentary entertainment, and I suspect that it looms larger in my memory than *Simba* for no better reason

than that I saw it twenty-four hours more recently. And yet *The Man Who Loved Redheads*, adapted by TERENCE RATTIGAN from his play *Who is Sylvia?* (which I did not see, but which people whose judgment I trust seem to regard with little enthusiasm), besides succeeding outstandingly well as entertainment, has some excellent qualities.

It also suggests that there is an actress in MOIRA SHEARER, who appears as the four redheads that successively, over more than forty years, engage the affections of the central character (JOHN JUSTIN). These are not parts with any depth: each is a formula-character, a mixture of two or three obvious attributes topped off with a distinctive accent; but it is still pleasant to watch her skill with them. Mr. JUSTIN too, though he has not very much to do except get older (which is mostly the responsibility of the make-up department), reveals a smooth light-comedy ability he has had hardly any chance to show in films before.

Third of the principal personages is ROLAND CULVER; it can't be pretended that his opportunities have been inadequate before, but his superlative comic adroitness is none the less delightful, and his presence means a great deal more to the film than the outline of his part would suggest. He is that familiar figure the Hero's Friend—the Hero's *raffish* Friend: he too is called upon to get older episode by episode, and very amusingly he does it.

Each fresh episode involves, apart from the changes in the protagonists, a different "period" atmosphere and a new set of minor characters to go with it. Again, the "period" sketches are superficial enough, but the decorative small incidents are so well directed, the touch of caricature in many of the portraits is so admirably light, that all are effective and pleasing. This is essentially a light-weight piece elaborately mounted, but it makes an excellent diversion.

Simba (Director: BRIAN DESMOND HURST) is a sincere effort to combine a fair statement of the Mau Mau evil with a story that will not be poison at the box-office. A fair statement: that is one of the most noteworthy things about the film. The problem is set up, perhaps too neatly, in the opening sequences, with sympathetic characters to personify each point of view: the man (DINK BOGARDE) arrives in Kenya to find his brother murdered and naturally lines up with the bitterest anti-African settlers, the girl (VIRGINIA MCKENNA) is ready to see the other side. There are also an African doctor, Karanja (EARL CAMERON) and a bluff police-inspector (DONALD SINDEN) who thinks Karanja may be the terrorist leader Simba. The pattern of incident is conventional and works up to the siege of a farm, a last-minute rescue, and a showdown.

But the detail is good, the location photography of scenery and people is very fine (though not always well matched in



{The Man Who Loved Redheads
Olga, 1929—MOIRA SHEARER

colour and lighting, shot with shot), and as a whole the film seems a worthy and informative study rather than what it so easily might have been, the commercial dressing-up of a topical theme.

Survey
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

There are several worth-while things in London. The wonderful Italian *Umberto D.*, simple, but continuously absorbing, moving, memorable, not to be missed; the universally enjoyable *The Great Adventure* (8/12/54); the Halas-Batchelor cartoon of *Animal Farm* (26/1/55); the scintillating *Carmen Jones* (19/1/55); *Woman's World* (26/1/55), a remarkably entertaining social comedy; and of course *Cinerama*.

Most important new release is a very good Western, *Garden of Evil* (1/12/54). *Rogue Cop* is a well-made crime thriller.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

New Year Offerings

BY screening telerecordings of Edward R. Murrow's celebrated C.B.S. series "Person to Person" the B.B.C. has given British viewers an opportunity to supplement and perhaps revise their opinions of American television. So far we have received little more than shoddy from the mighty networks of transatlantic TV—a few lengths of newsreel, a series of "Amos 'n Andy" telefilms, and a feeble set of thrillers (so-called) featuring George Raft and entitled "I Am the Law"—and viewers have been left to draw their own conclusions about the relative merits of sponsored and institutional broadcasting.

At the same time the B.B.C. has stuck its neck out by allowing viewers to compare Murrow's method of conducting an interview with that apparently regarded by Lime Grove as pre-ordained and immutable. The British idea is to arrange interviewer and celebrity side by side, standing shoulder to shoulder in embarrassing contiguity and staring glassily into the very jaws of the camera. This set-up is favoured, I imagine, because it fills the domestic screen with something resembling humanity and avoids the necessity of providing any kind of *mise en scène* other than a backcloth, a shelf of books or the Gordon Russell sideboard. These people are here, says Lime Grove, because they have something to say: they are interesting only from the neck up, so let us jam them together in close-up. And if the resultant picture seems stiff and static, well, who cares? The cameramen are happy, the producers are happy, and the viewers (what more do they want?) can get nearer to their TV idols than a schoolgirl to



Malcolm Muggeridge—Gilbert Harding—Richard Dimbleby
Frank Owen—Peter Dimmock—Max Robertson.

an autographed picture of her favourite film star.

The American method, on the other hand, is to allow interviewer and celebrity as much elbow-room as possible, to let them move about quite naturally, and to make the cameras and microphones follow them. In "Person to Person" the viewer looks through a keyhole: in "Panorama" he rubs noses with a photograph album.

I am aware that Murrow's interviews with Miss Pons and Miss Gabor are the carefully edited result of a lengthy filmed *tête à tête*, and I am prepared to admit that telefilm loses the sparkle and immediacy of "live" studio television. But in general I prefer the contrived informality of these American shows to the relentless third-degree invigilation practised by the B.B.C.

It may be argued, of course, that "Person to Person" is cinema rather than television, and that Lime Grove, for all its mistakes, is making real progress in the

new medium; and with this opinion I have no quarrel. All I ask is that the B.B.C. should occasionally let us see its interviewers and celebrities without their strait-jackets, or with just a few buttons undone.

Other series to break the January ice are "Home" ("a magazine programme to interest the family") and "Nine Days' Wonder," an animated "Believe It or Not" à la Ripley. The "Home" effort I find completely baffling. Is it intended to be taken seriously? Or is this some elaborate rag of the more drooling of women's magazines? I fail to see how a mixed bag of hints on glamorized dressmaking, cooking, interior decoration and so on can hold the attention of more than a handful of viewers.

The component items are not advertised in *Radio Times*, and the individual's chance of seeing something in which he or she has an immediate interest is very remote. But perhaps I am missing the point; perhaps the B.B.C. is trying here to anticipate the fare to be offered by the I.T.A.

"Nine Days' Wonder" is more promising. It was a good idea to rope in a Fleet Street news-sleuth as compère and interlocutor of the programme, and Frank Owen fills the bill very adequately—with appropriate earnestness and the air of a scientific humanist confronted by irrefragable evidence of miraculous phenomena. I shall be surprised if Michael Mills, who writes and produces this half-hour of mystery and curiosity, manages to maintain the high standard of the first instalments. The number of classical mysteries that lend themselves to convincing indoor dramatization in costume cannot be very large.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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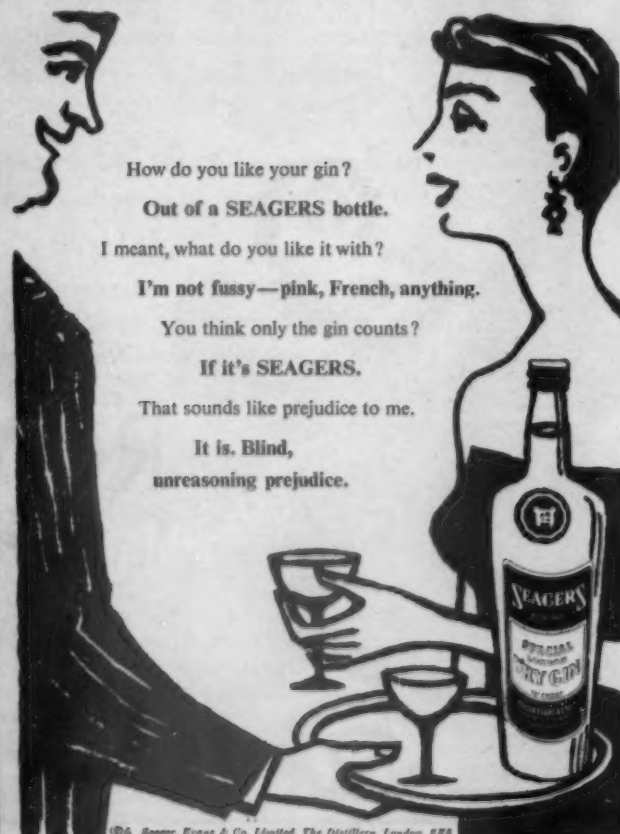
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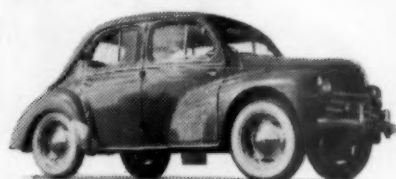
*or do you see
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